

Message Text

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EXDIS

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TAGS: PFOR, NATO, TU

SUBJECT: SITUATION IN THE SOUTHERN REGION

REF: USNATO 1220

1. SUMMARY: WE FOUND REFTEL TO BE A PERCEPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEMS WE FACE IN NATO'S SOUTHERN REGION. ELABORATING ON SOME OF THE THEMES OF THIS MESSAGE, WE WOULD ADD TO AMBASSADOR BRUCE'S LIST OF QUESTIONS DESERVING PRIORITY ATTENTION ONE TOPIC OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO TURKEY: CAN NATO INCREASE ITS VALUE AS A BROKER FOR ITS SOUTHERN MEMBERS' INTERESTS TO OFFSET LOOSENING OF TIES CAUSED BY BILATERAL DISPUTES AND REDUCTION OF THE ALLIED MILITARY PRESENCE? END SUMMARY.

2. AMBASSADOR BRUCE'S MESSAGE SUCCINCTLY OUTLINES THE PROGRESSIVE SHRINKING OF THE ALLIED MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, WHICH HAS INCREASED OUR RELIANCE ON

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LONG-RANGE WEAPONS, LOGISTICS AND INTELLIGENCE SYSTEMS,

AND SUGGESTS THAT THE CURRENT COURSE OF EVENTS IN THE AREA HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED FOR FURTHER TECHNICAL ADVANCES IN THIS DIRECTION. WE FULLY AGREE WITH THIS GENERAL OBSERVATION AND WOULD WELCOME IN PARTICULAR A STUDY OF THE COSTS IN FUNDS AND PRODUCT OF REPLACING INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION INSTALLATIONS IN TURKEY WITH REMOTE SYSTEMS. WE WOULD ALSO SUGGEST, HOWEVER, THAT ATTENTION BE PAID TO THE REVERSE FLOW ALONG THIS AXIS; I.E., TO THE EFFECT THAT OUR RELIANCE ON LONG-RANGE SYSTEMS HAS HAD AND WILL HAVE ON OUR SOUTHERN FLANK ALLIES' TIES TO THEIR NEIGHBORS, THE U.S. AND NATO.

3. LONG-RANGE DELIVERY SYSTEMS, NUCLEAR PARITY AND ASSOCIATED EFFORTS AT DETENTE HAVE, OF COURSE, DECREASED TENSION ALONG THE ENTIRE NATO PERIPHERY. INCREASED SOVIET NAVAL CAPABILITIES AND INCREASED SOVIET ACCESS TO MIDDLE EAST NATIONS SOUTH OF TURKEY HAVE FURTHER REDUCED THE RISKS OF EARLY CONFRONTATION ON SOUTHERN FLANK BORDERS. THIS DECREASE IN THE IMMEDIATE SOVIET THREAT HAS CREATED TWO SOMEWHAT PARADOXICAL TENDENCIES ON THE PART OF TURKS. ON THE ONE HAND THEY FEEL LESS RESTRAINED IN PURSUING NATIONAL OBJECTIVES WHICH MAY CONFLICT WITH THOSE OF OTHER MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE. ON THE OTHER, THEY FEAR THAT NATO NATIONS IN GENERAL AND THE U.S. IN PARTICULAR ARE NOW MUCH LESS CONCERNED WITH THEIR LONG TERM FATE. EVENTS SURROUNDING THE CYPRUS DISPUTE SUGGEST THAT THESE ATTITUDES CAN IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES BE MUTUALLY REINFORCING.

4. THE POSITIONS RECENTLY TAKEN BY TURKEY ON GREEK INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AND WINTEX ILLUSTRATE THE TYPE OF PROBLEMS THIS SITUATION POSES FOR NATO. THESE POSITIONS REFLECT IN PART NARROW TURKISH INTEREST IN SEEING THAT GREECE DOES NOT DERIVE BENEFITS FOR SERVICES IT IS NO LONGER PERFORMING FOR NATO AND THAT TURKEY RECEIVES DUE COMPENSATION FOR ANY INCREASED DEFENSE LOAD IT IS REQUIRED TO BEAR. ALSO MOTIVATING THE TURKS, HOWEVER, IS A BROADER AND QUITE GENUINE CONCERN THAT OTHER NATO MEMBERS ARE BECOMING LESS AND LESS MINDFUL OF THE SOUTHERN FLANK'S NEEDS AND ANXIOUS TO
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DUCK THE TOUGH PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THEM.

5. THE QUESTION WE WOULD ASK IS WHETHER NATO HAS THE MEANS AND THE DEXTERITY TO DEMONSTRATE TO EACH OF THESE SOUTHERN FLANK MEMBERS THAT THEIR CONCERNS WILL BE MET WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PERMITTING NEITHER TO USE THE ORGANIZATION AGAINST THE OTHER. FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW WE THINK THE CAPABILITIES OF NATO FORA IN THIS FIELD ARE

GOOD BECAUSE (A) THEY HAVE THE EARS OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MILITARY AND CIVILIAN CIRCLES IN TURKEY, (B) THEIR FAMILIAR SETTINGS AND DRAMATIS PERSONAE INSPIRE CONFIDENCE AND FRANKNESS, AND (C) AT OUR BEHEST THEY SHOW SIGNS OF BECOMING EFFECTIVE BROKERS FOR BILATERAL ASSISTANCE.

6. WE HOPE THAT THE FUTURE COURSE OF EVENTS WILL AT SOME POINT CAUSE BOTH TURKEY AND GREECE TO FOCUS LESS ON THEIR BILATERAL PROBLEMS AND MORE ON THEIR LONG TERM INTERESTS IN THE NATO ALLIANCE. IN THE MEANTIME, WE ARE FACED WITH THE TASK OF PREVENTING EITHER COUNTRY FROM DISMANTLING PARTS OF THE STRUCTURE FOR WHICH THEY MAY NOW NOW BUT WILL IN THE FUTURE APPRECIATE THE NEED. WHILE PRUDENCE DICTATES THAT WE NOW PREPARE TO DECREASE OUR DEPENDENCE ON U.S. ASSETS IN THE SOUTHERN REGION, WE WOULD HOPE THAT THE LOOSENING OF TIES RESULTING FROM SUCH MOVES COULD BE COUNTERBALANCED BY A CONCURRENT GROWTH IN NATO'S ROLE AS AN HONEST BROKER.
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